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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2016

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/71/463)]

71/220. Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 65/149 of 20 December 2010 and 68/208 of 20 December 2013,

Recalling also the relevant recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in June 1972,[1]

Noting the relevant provisions of Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992[2] and reaffirmed in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), adopted in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002,[3] and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", adopted in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012,[4]

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to

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[1] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5–16 June 1972* (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1), part one.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] Resolution 66/288, annex.

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building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling the efforts to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, including preventing and significantly reducing, by 2025, marine pollution of all kinds,[5]

Welcoming the Paris Agreement[6] and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[7] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Reaffirming the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,[8] which provides the legal framework for ocean activities, and emphasizing its fundamental character, conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach,

Recalling relevant international and regional instruments such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction,[9] the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter,[10] the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,[11] the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean,[12] the Agreement on the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Area of the South-East Pacific,[13] the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area[14] and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic,[15]

Taking note of the ministerial declaration of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission), adopted in Copenhagen on

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[5] See resolution 70/1.

[6] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[8] Ibid., vol. 1833, No. 31363.

[9] Ibid., vol. 1974, No. 33757.

[10] Ibid., vol. 1046, No. 15749.

[11] Ibid., vol. 1506, No. 25974.

[12] Ibid., vol. 1102, No. 16908.

[13] Ibid., vol. 1648, No. 28325.

[14] Ibid., vol. 2099, No. 36495.

[15] Ibid., vol. 2354, No. 42279.

3 October 2013, in which the signatories recognized the need for forward-looking options for solutions and an assessment of the environmental risks posed by, inter alia, munitions dumped at sea, welcomed the 2013 report of the ad hoc expert group to update and review the existing information on dumped chemical munitions in the Baltic Sea and agreed to produce another one-off thematic assessment of the environmental risks of hazardous submerged objects, also utilizing the 2013 report on dumped chemical munitions, with the new assessment to be presented by 2018,[16]

Noting the national, regional and international activities, including scientific research,[17] data collection and sharing, awareness-raising, reporting on encounters and technical advice, related to munitions dumped at sea, inter alia, in the frameworks of the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean,

Emphasizing that, in the report on the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Third Review Conference), adopted at The Hague on 19 April 2013, the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction were invited to support voluntary sharing of information, raising awareness and cooperation on this issue,

Noting that Member States, international and regional organizations and civil society have undertaken activities to discuss and promote the issues related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, including international cooperation and the exchange of experiences and practical knowledge,

Noting also that the first global integrated marine assessment, also known as the World Oceans Assessment, which included a specific chapter on waste, was launched in 2015 and welcomed with appreciation by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/235 of 23 December 2015,[18]

Noting further the concerns about the potential long-term environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, including their potential impact on human health and safety and on the marine environment and resources,

Recognizing the mandates and capacities of competent United Nations system entities in the fields of marine environment monitoring, research and information-sharing, as well as pollution preparedness and response,[19]

Recognizing also the ongoing efforts aimed at awareness-raising, information-sharing and capacity-building at various levels, as well as partnership and cooperation on the issue among relevant regional and international bodies, including

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[16] See the findings of the Expert Group on Environmental Risks of Hazardous Submerged Objects of the Helsinki Commission, under the supervision of the Response Working Group of the Commission.

[17] See, for example, the findings of the Baltic Sea research project entitled "Chemical Munitions, Search and Assessment (CHEMSEA)", which is conducting research on environmental effects related to chemical munitions dumped at sea. The findings summarize all results obtained by the project.

[18] See A/70/112 and A/71/190.

[19] Competent United Nations system entities include, inter alia, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Secretariat.

the United Nations, the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and others,[20]

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,[21] including the views submitted and contained therein;

2. *Notes* the importance of raising awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

3. *Invites* Member States and relevant international and regional organizations to keep under observation the issue of the waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, to continue outreach efforts to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to that issue and to cooperate, including by strengthening existing efforts within regional seas conventions and other international, regional and subregional activities related to risk assessment, monitoring, information-gathering, risk prevention and response to incidents;

4. *Encourages* voluntary sharing of information on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea through conferences, seminars, workshops, training courses and publications aimed at the general public and industry in order to reduce related risks;

5. *Also encourages* partnerships between Governments, industry and civil society for raising awareness, reporting and monitoring of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

6. *Invites* Member States in a position to do so to consider providing assistance and sharing expertise aimed at building capacities related to risk assessment, monitoring, information-gathering, risk prevention and response to incidents resulting from waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

7. *Encourages* Member States to share experiences, good practices and information on the technologies available to treat, conserve or safely destroy the waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea;

8. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, also with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database[22] and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, as well as identifying the appropriate intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system for further consideration and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures envisaged in the present resolution, building on and without duplicating existing activities, and with a view to achieving efficiency and synergies, taking into account the mandates and capacities of relevant international and regional organizations;

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[20] See A/71/190.

[21] A/71/190.

[22] Such a database could contain relevant and voluntarily shared information on, inter alia, the location of dumping sites, the type, quantity and, to the extent possible, the current condition of chemical munitions, the recorded environmental impact, best practices on risk prevention and response to incidents or accidental encounters and destruction or impact reduction technologies, including by means of data collection and management.

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, prepared using responses of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations, as well as other available information, and decides to include the item entitled "Sustainable development" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fourth session, unless otherwise agreed.

66th plenary meeting
21 December 2016